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ABSTRACT

This report concerns forty-six Jobs Unlimited placements of women in Louisiana into nontraditional jobs (mostly blue-collar or skilled craft fields) between April 1976 and January 1977. (Jobs Unlimited was a project which informed the public, especially women, of opportunities available in nontraditional employment.) The report researches the demographic background, employment history, and social characteristics of the women placed, explores client adjustment and progress in the new job, and examines the attitudes of personnel administrators toward women in nontraditional jobs, and those of women toward their nontraditional work. Some of the major conclusions presented follow: (1) For most of the forty-six women placed, the greatest strides came in the areas of wages and chances for advancement, (2) the job retention rate of 85% with an average eight months of service indicated that, with proper counseling and screening of prospective employees, excessive turnover rates for women workers can be avoided, (3) the experience of nontraditional employment has been a positive one for the majority of women involved, (4) as a whole, company administrators failed to notice any significant effects from the employment of women, and (5) neither foremen nor administrators perceived any considerable advantages in the hiring of women, although overall reactions were generally positive. (Recommendations concerning the hiring of women in nontraditional jobs are included in this report. Twelve biographical sketches of women who served as subjects are appended to reflect the diversity of the women and their experiences in their new employment.) (SH)

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FORTY-SIX PIONEERS:
Louisiana Women in Non-Traditional Jobs

A research project
of the
Louisiana Bureau for Women
Office of Human Services
Louisiana Department of Health and Human Resources

November, 1977

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
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INTRODUCTION

The Louisiana Bureau for Women is currently sponsoring Women and Employment, a project funded by the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, to encourage the entrance of women into non-traditional jobs. WE, as the project is known, succeeds an earlier project, Jobs Unlimited, which was funded from early 1976 to January 31, 1977. This project had identical goals and purposes.

WE combines three areas of effort: education, placement, and research. The education component seeks to inform the general public, especially women, of the opportunities available in non-traditional employment. The education component publishes a newsletter, WRITES, and sponsors a continuing series of educational conferences at high schools, vocational-technical schools, and in the community.

In addition to job location for bureau clients, the placement component provides career counseling to women who want non-traditional work, and offers employment and referral services to employers. The research component is responsible for two reports, related to Louisiana women in the work world. The first is a study of the women placed through Jobs Unlimited from a standpoint of both labor and management. The second report is a general survey of women in the Louisiana labor market.

SCOPE OF THE REPORT

This report concerns forty-six Jobs Unlimited placements of women into non-traditional jobs between April, 1976, and January, 1977. A "placement" is defined as the employment of a woman in a non-traditional job resulting either from direct job development and referral services to an employer by a Bureau for Women staffer, or self-placement by a client after substantial Bureau services. These services include career counseling, labor market or job description information, and interview preparation. "Non-traditional" jobs are those in which women have, over the years, been underrepresented by practice or custom. Most of the forty-six non-traditional placements were into blue-collar or skilled-craft fields.

This study researches the demographic background, employment history, and social characteristics of the women placed, explores client adjustment and progress in the new job, and examines the attitudes of personnel administrators toward women in non-traditional jobs, and those of women toward their non-traditional work.

THE RESEARCH METHOD

Data on clients served by the project were derived from office records at the Bureau for Women. Demographic and social data were compiled from application and intake forms, supplemented by interviews. Most of the information on client adjustment to the work environment was uncovered in face-to-face interviews with thirty-nine of the forty-six placements. Interviewees were asked

to respond to more than seventy-five open-ended questions, with most of the meetings lasting well over one hour. Seven placements either declined to be interviewed or were not located by the researcher.

Information on attitudes in business and industry toward the women in non-traditional jobs was compiled from questionnaires sent to personnel officers, foremen, and supervisors of the women involved.

CLIENTS SERVED BY THE PROGRAM

Beginning in February and continuing through July, a series of five day-long conferences was held in major cities across the state highlighting career options in non-traditional fields for women. The goal was to provide women who were considering non-traditional work with information that would aid them in finding employment on their own, and to compile a talent bank of women who showed promise for placement. It is estimated that approximately eight hundred Louisiana women attended these conferences in the following cities:

Baton Rouge.....	300 participants
New Orleans.....	200
Shreveport.....	150
Lafayette.....	75
Alexandria.....	75
TOTAL:	800

In addition to these conferences aimed at non-traditional job-seekers, a September seminar in Baton Rouge brought together more than one hundred employers to share information and experiences on the employment of women in non-traditional occupations. The

aim of the seminar was threefold: to convince employers of the interest of women in non-traditional work; to demonstrate female ability by the use of role models; and to suggest solutions to problems employers might encounter in the employment of women.

Women who learned of the project via media public-service announcements or word-of-mouth added to the client group. Counselors estimated that, once the project gained publicity and credibility in the community, at least ten women per week were served with career counseling, information on the labor market or on particular segments of it, or advice on application and interview procedure. It is estimated that at least 300 women received these Bureau services.

Seventy women were chosen for enrollment into placement services. Of this number, forty were placed directly into non-traditional jobs by the Bureau staff, and six located their own non-traditional employment. Five of the enrollees took traditional employment of their own finding. One woman left the program to enroll in college; another relocated out of the area. The seventeen remaining women were terminated before they could be placed into employment when the program ended on January 31, 1977.

The second grant period began February 1, 1977, with essentially the same goals and components as the first grant. Women and Employment has enjoyed the same success as its predecessor. The series of conferences on non-traditional jobs that was aimed at the adult woman in the first grant has been geared to the student woman (in vocational schools and high schools) in the second grant. Placement and counseling services have been expanded to New Orleans, in addition to Baton Rouge. By September 30th WE had placed 45 women

with an expectation of placing approximately 60.

THE PLACEMENTS: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE JOB AND THE JOB HOLDERS

TYPES OF JOBS:

The great majority (89%) of the original 46 placements were into blue-collar jobs. Only five (11%) were into non-traditional, white-collar fields.

The chemical and petroleum industry was the largest employer of women, accounting for twenty-two (48%) of the forty-six placements. Metal and plastic processors took the next largest share with nine placements (20%). Four clients became labor-union apprentices, and four were hired by retail firms. Wholesale firms hired two Bureau placements. One placement went to work in each of the following businesses: marine contractor, law enforcement agency, engineering consultant, transportation firm, and communication industry.

FIGURE I

JOBS UNLIMITED

Job titles of women placed into non-traditional jobs between April 1, 1976 and January 1, 1977

JOB TITLE	NUMBER
Laborer	8
Plant Operator	8
Fiberglas Fabricator	7
Carpenter Apprentice	1
Tool Clerk	1
Wareman	1
Maintenance Person	1
Maintenance Technician	1
Truck Driver	1

JOB TITLE	NUMBER
Installer	1
Utility Operator	1
Roustabout	1
Welder	1
Communications Consultant	1
Assistant Public Relations Officer	1
Draftswoman	1
Route Salesperson	1
Ironworker Apprentice	1
Process Technician	1
Small Engine Repairer	1
Warehouseman	1
Deliverer	1
Personnel Assistant	1
Pipefitter	1
Utility Person	1
Security Guard	1
TOTAL	46

Source: Bureau for Women records.

Information on the types of jobs women were placed into after Bureau services in comparison to their pre-placement jobs is contained in Figure 2. Of particular significance is the sharp decline in the number of job holders in the "clerical and sales occupations" category and a corresponding increase in the number of "processing occupations" job holders.

FIGURE 2

BEFORE-PLACEMENT AND AFTER-PLACEMENT

*OCCUPATIONS BY TYPE**

46 non-traditional placements

TYPE OF JOB	Number of job holders before Bureau placement	Number of job holders after Bureau placement
Professional, technical, and managerial occupations	10	3

TYPE OF JOB	Number of job holders before Bureau placement	Number of job holders after Bureau placement
Clerical and sales occupations	24	3
Service occupations	3	1
Processing occupations	4	25
Machine trades	1	2
Bench work	1	1
Structural work	2	6
Miscellaneous occupations	1	5
TOTALS:	46	46

*Source: Bureau for Women records. Occupational categories used are those listed in the U.S. Department of Labor's Dictionary of Occupational Titles.

WAGES:

The mean starting wage for the forty-six women placed into non-traditional employment was $4.56 per hour ($789 per month). More than 65% of the placements earned starting salaries above $4.00 per hour (see Figure 3). This compares to the mean wage in previous employment of only $2.83 per hour ($490 per month), with only 16% earning more than $4.00 per hour. The average placement among the forty-six increased her earning power by $1.73 per hour (approximately $300 per month) or 65%. The non-traditional job translates, for the average woman, to a pay increase of approximately $70 per week.

FIGURE 3

Before and After Wages by Category
46 non-traditional placements

	Before Placement		After Placement	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Per-Hour Wage				
$1.00 - 1.99	6	14%	0	
$2.00 - 2.99	23	52%	10	22%
$3.00 - 3.99	8	18%	6	13%
$4.00 - 4.99	7	16%	14	30%
$5.00 - 5.99	0		11	24%
$6.00 - 6.99	0		3	7%
$7.00 - 7.99	0		2	4%
TOTALS:	44*	100%	46	100%

Source: Bureau for Women records.

*Wage information not available for two clients.

Perhaps one reason why women are seeking blue-collar jobs in growing numbers is the disparity in average salaries of white-collar and blue-collar placements. Surprisingly, blue-collar placements earned more than one dollar per hour more than their white-collar counterparts ($810 average monthly salary for blue-collar workers, $630 for white-collar workers). To be sure, a sample of only five white-collar workers is not extensive enough to project labor market realities; the figures, nevertheless, speak for themselves. Despite the greater education of the white-collar workers, blue-collars out-earned them sharply, reflecting

a growing reality that, in many cases, increased education is not the only "ticket" to greater earning power.

PREVIOUS NON-TRADITIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Not all of the forty-six women placed had held only "traditional" female employment in the past. At some time in their job histories, sixteen had held non-traditional jobs of one kind or another. This allowed an introduction to the benefits and the problems involved with work that women do not ordinarily do. In most cases, however, the Bureau placed these "experienced" women into other fields. A former postal dockworker became a maintenance trainee; a saleswoman of institutional equipment became an ironworker apprentice; an insurance claims adjuster found employment as a communications consultant. In each case, new barriers were broken.

What is noteworthy about this group of "experienced" women in non-traditional employment is that more than half of them (nine of sixteen) gained their non-traditional experience in northern or western states before relocating or returning to Louisiana. There was a feeling among these women that, without their out-of-state work experience, they would never have found a non-traditional job in Louisiana. Many expressed dismay that few employers seemed willing to hire an inexperienced, although able and committed, female employee.

An ex-production operator, formerly of Texas, cited the vast differences between attitudes of employers in that state and in Louisiana. "In Texas, a woman who worked in a plant was not an oddity. Employers gave her full consideration for openings. Not so in Louisiana." She searched the Baton Rouge area full-time for

three months before finding, with the Bureau's help, a job as an appliance installer. Another woman, a native of Illinois, relocated to Louisiana after being trained in drafting in the Chicago school system. "People--women or men--can get quality training in drafting and things like it in the North," she related. "Certain public high schools specialize in mechanical, industrial, and technical subjects. If I had grown up in Louisiana, I wouldn't be a draftswoman today." Two other women (a dockworker and a machine operator from midwestern states) testified that the employment climate in Louisiana for women in non-traditional jobs is less than in other states.

LENGTH OF PRIOR WORK EXPERIENCE:

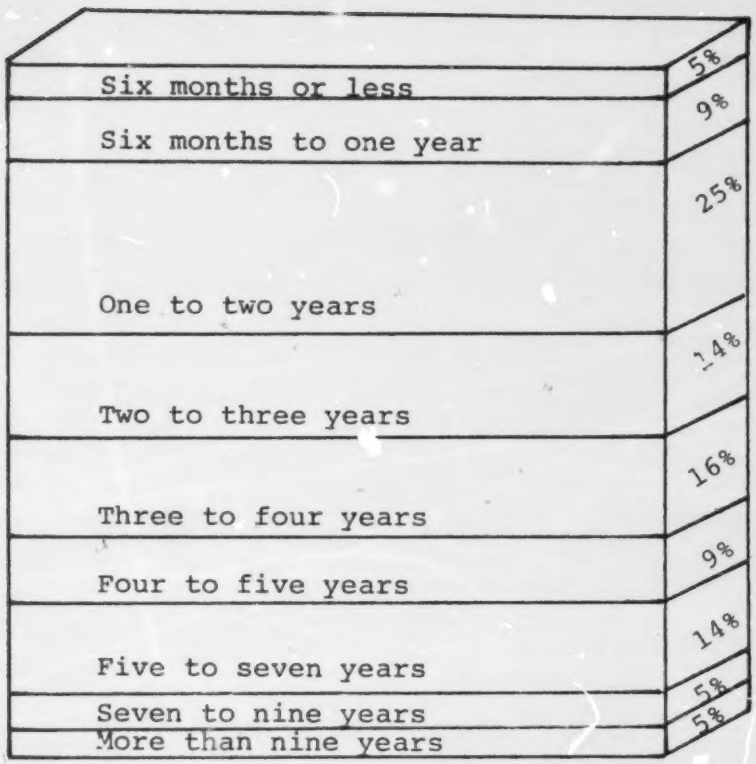
Judging from the experience of these forty-six women, a modicum of work experience in <u>any</u> field is a primary prerequisite to entering non-traditional work. Nearly half of the women had held paying jobs for at least three years before entering non-traditional work. Mean number of months of work experience was forty-two, while the median was twenty-nine months. Eighty-eight percent of the placements had been in the work force for more than twelve months, sixty-three percent for more than twenty-four months. Figure 4 shows the prior work experience of the placements.

FIGURE 4

WORK EXPERIENCE

PRIOR TO PLACEMENT

44 women
in non-traditional jobs



Source: Bureau for Women records. Information not available on two placements. Total adds up to more than 100% due to rounding.

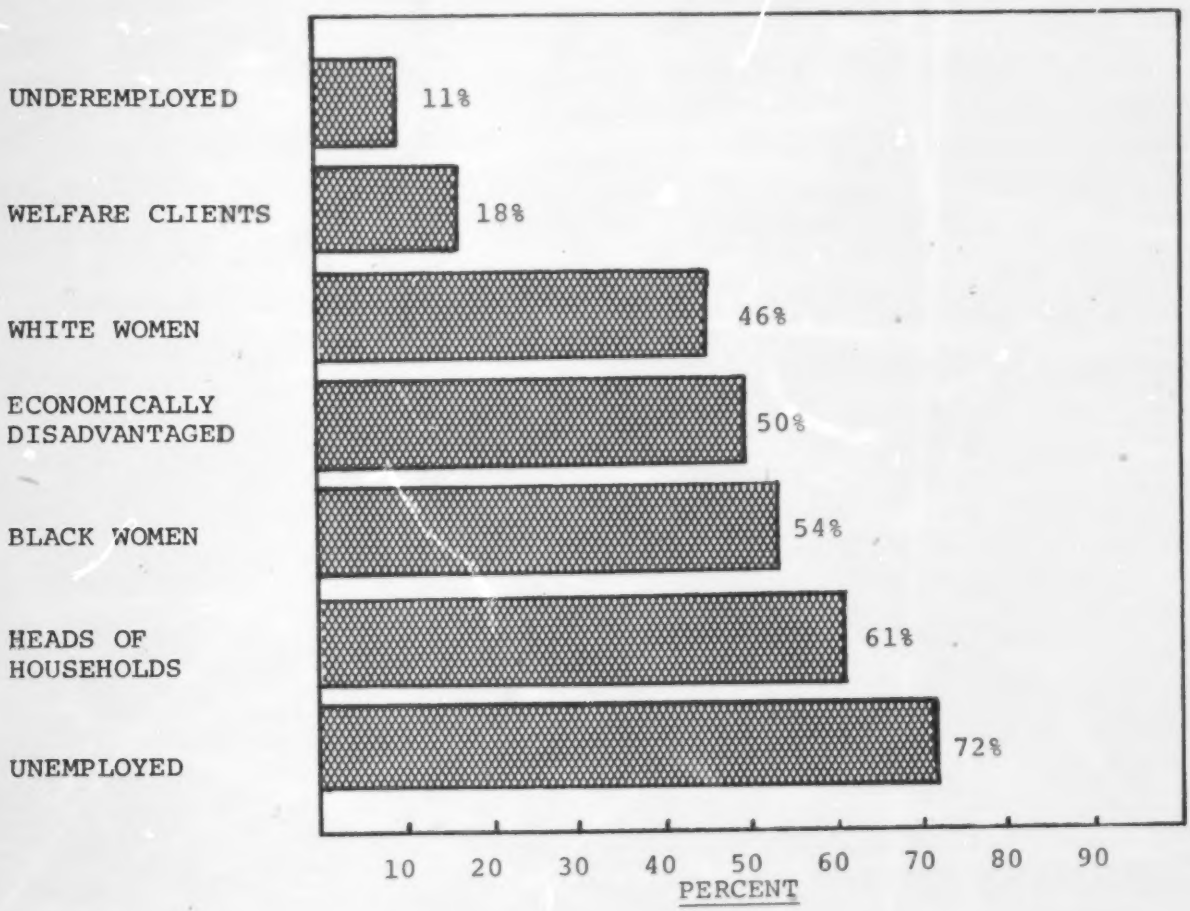
OTHER CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WOMEN:

What kind of women do "non-traditional" work? What kind of background motivates a woman to seek a job loading and unloading boxcars or selling phone equipment? In Figure 5 the demographic and social characteristics of the women are examined.

FIGURE 5

SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMEN IN NON-TRADITIONAL JOBS

46 Bureau for Women placements



Source: Bureau for Women records.

The typical woman in a Bureau-placed job is the head of her household, between twenty and thirty years of age, and a mother. Sixty-one percent (28 women) are the heads of their households, relied upon by other family members for support.

Eighteen percent of the women were receiving public assistance payments at the time of placement. Those women, formerly tax consumers, are now tax payers by virtue of their earnings. Fully half of the women were classified, according to standards of the United States Department of Labor, as "economically disadvantaged," a partial result of the relatively low wages earned in previous employment and the large percentage of breadwinner mothers. Almost all of the placements were either unemployed or underemployed* at the time of placement. One-fourth of the placements are single, one-third (15) are married, one-fourth (12) are separated, and the remaining number (7) are divorced. Seventy percent are mothers, with a total of fifty-seven dependents divided among the twenty-six mothers interviewed, as outlined in Figure 6.

*"Underemployed" refers to those persons who work part-time but seek full-time work or whose salary relative to family size places them below federal poverty standards.

FIGURE 6

BREAKOUT OF MARITAL STATUS AND DEPENDENTS
Bureau for Women non-traditional placements

MARITAL STATUS	PLACEMENTS NUMBER	PLACEMENTS PERCENT	# OF DEPENDENTS 0	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL DEPENDENTS
Single	10	26%	8	2					2
Married	12	32%	2	2	5	2		1	23
Separated	10	26%		4	2	2	1	1	23
Divorced	6	16%	2	2	1			1	9
TOTALS:	38	100%	12	10	8	4	1	3	57

Source: Interviews with 38 women in non-traditional jobs.
Information not available for remaining placements.

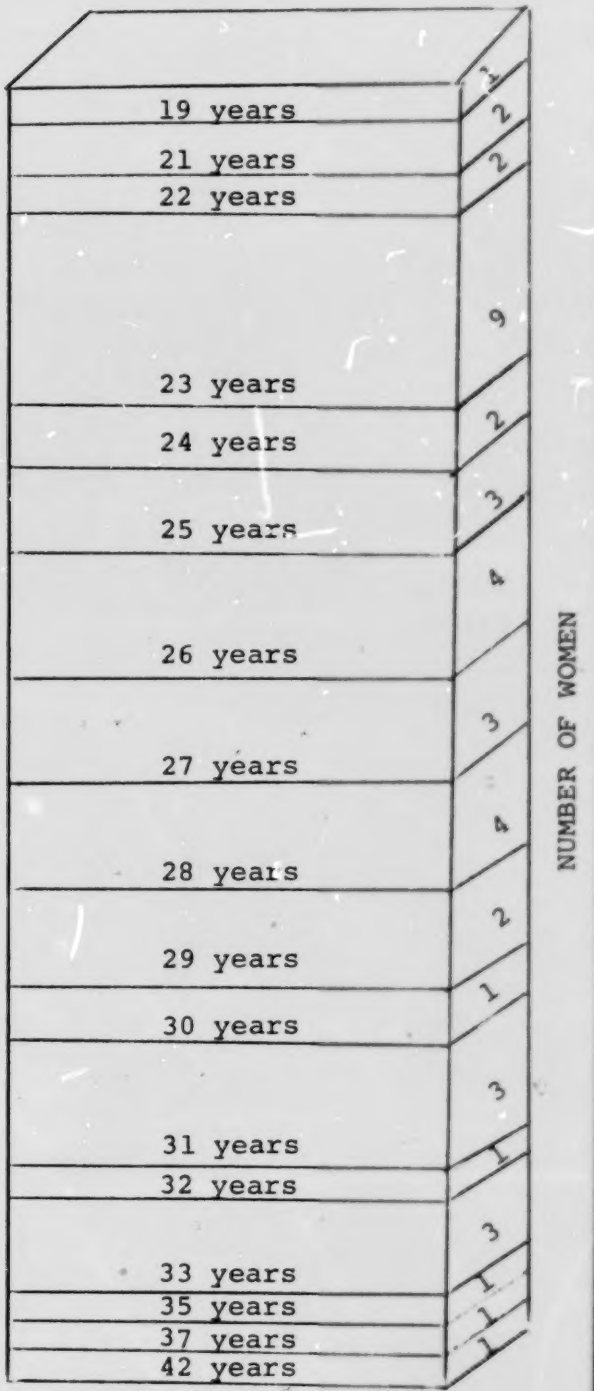
The women placed were relatively young, with approximately 70% under 30 years of age. Mean age was 27 years. Several factors contribute to the relative youth of the placement group. One of these is the reluctance or inability of some older women to consider non-traditional work, especially blue-collar jobs. Another is that many employers prefer not to hire mature women if long training programs are required or if the job requires a degree of physical labor. A third factor that tends to exclude older women from the ranks of non-traditional work is maximum age limits in labor-union apprenticeship programs. Almost all apprenticeship programs have age cutoffs, generally in the middle or high twenties.

Figure 7 delineates the age distribution at time of placement.

FIGURE 7

AGE AT TIME OF PLACEMENT

43 women in non-traditional jobs



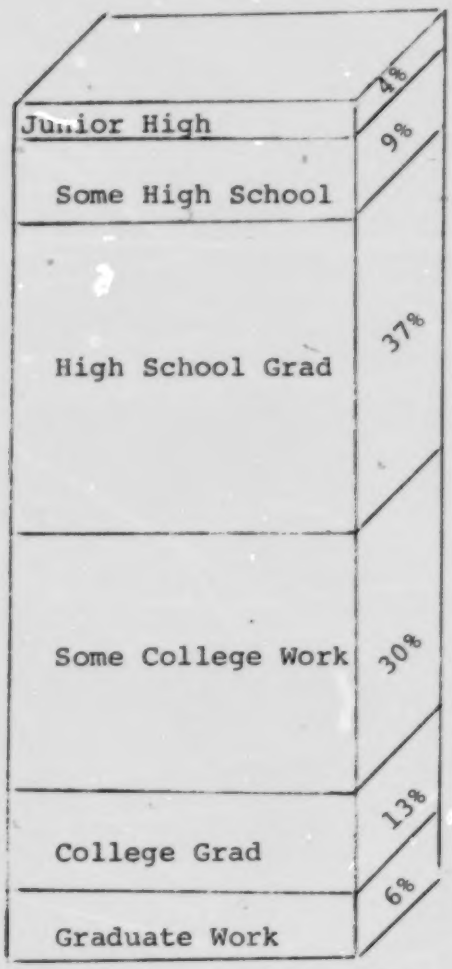
Source: Bureau for Women records.

The women exhibited a relatively high degree of educational achievement. Average education for all placements was 13.2 years. Blue-collar workers had an average education of 12.8 years, white-collar workers, 15.8 years. Fewer than 13% (6) of all placements lacked a high school education, nearly 20% (9) had a college degree, and half of all the women placed had at least one year of college. A detailed outline of educational achievement appears in Figure 8.

FIGURE 8

EDUCATION AT TIME OF PLACEMENT

46 women in non-traditional jobs



Source: Bureau for Women records

The popular conception that blue-collar women must be physically large is not supported by the research findings. In fact, there was little difference in the statures and weights of the blue-collar and white-collar women placed. Average blue-collar height was 5 feet, 5 inches; average white-collar size was just one inch less. Blue-collar women averaged 138 pounds; white-collar women ten pounds less.

There were relatively few complaints by the women that their size interfered with work performance. It is possible that employers who consider only the large woman for a blue-collar job may bypass a wealth of talent in moderate-sized women, and that job ability has less to do with one's size and strength than with how that strength is applied.

FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS WITH THE 1976 PLACEMENTS

We attempted to interview each of the forty-six women placed by Jobs Unlimited during 1976 and January of 1977. We succeeded in locating and interviewing thirty-nine of the forty-six. We wanted information on job retention and drop-out rates, adjustment to the work, climate of the work environment, problem areas for the workers, feelings of the workers toward their jobs, promotions and raises, and effects of the job on personal, social, and family life.

The women interviewed had worked from four months to thirteen months. Average length of service on the non-traditional job for all forty-six placements, including those no longer working, was slightly less than eight months at the time

they were interviewed. For those still working in the original or a "better" non-traditional job, average length of service was thirty-four weeks. For the six women who were no longer employed in non-traditional work, average time on the job was twelve weeks.

The women demonstrated a very high rate of job retention. Of the thirty-nine women interviewed, thirty-three (85%) were still working in non-traditional work. Thirty-two (82%) were still working in the Bureau-placed non-traditional occupation, and one had taken another non-traditional job. Only fifteen percent (6) of the thirty-nine women interviewed were no longer working in a non-traditional job. One resigned to attend law school; one left because of sexual harassment by her foreman; one had transportation problems; one had child care conflicts; one was discharged because of inability to perform duties (the client denies that this was the actual reason); and one was pregnant.

Many of the women see their jobs in career terms only. Of thirty women who were asked whether non-traditional work is a job or a career, twenty-one (70%) said it was a career, seven (23%) said it was a job only, and two (7%) didn't know at that point. Forty-two percent hope to do the same work that they now do for the rest of their working years, twenty-four percent want to do other non-traditional work, and an equal number are undecided about the traditional or non-traditional direction of their career. Eight percent (3 women) have plans to own their own business. Only one woman has definite plans to return to traditional work. Nearly half plan to work until retirement age, and others plan to work a substantial portion of their lives.

RESPONSE ANALYSIS 1

HOW MANY YEARS DO YOU PLAN TO BE IN THE LABOR FORCE?

Less than ten years	3%
Eleven to twenty years longer	14%
Twenty-one to thirty years longer	17%
Until retirement age	44%
Plan to be self-employed	8%
Indefinitely or unsure	14%
TOTAL:	100%

The women still working were asked if they would ever take a traditional job again. Of thirty respondents, fourteen (47%) said "not ever" and four (13%) replied that they would return to traditional work only if there were no alternative. Four others said they would "possibly" return to traditional employment. Twenty-seven percent (8 women) said they would return if traditional work paid as much as non-traditional work, an unlikely development. Only one of the thirty respondents would give an unqualified yes to a return to traditional work.

The women showed a willingness to work any hours required by the company. Of those still working, eleven worked rotating shifts, some with eight-hour shifts and some with twelve-hour shifts. During a typical rotating-shift schedule, a worker is required to work each possible shift (days, evenings, and "graveyard" shift) for an equal number of workdays before the cycle begins again. The nineteen women who worked days only were usually expected at work each day by five, six, or seven a.m.

Others who went to work later were not discharged until six p.m. Approximately half of the women had regularly-scheduled weekend work. Others were subject to call-in at almost any hour of any day in case of an emergency or a breakdown at work.

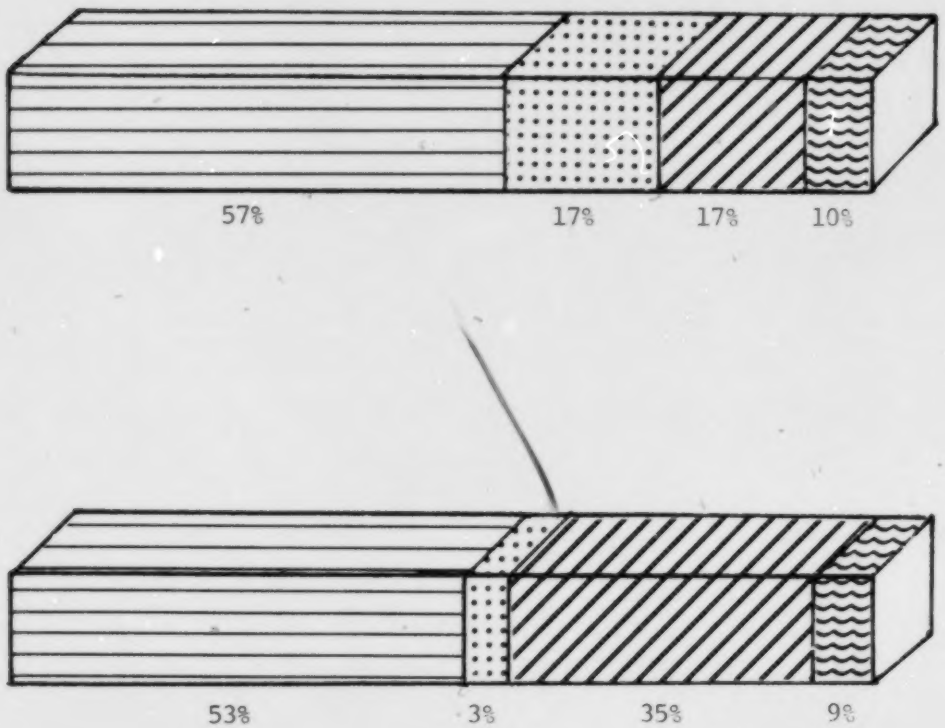
It is difficult to imagine the conflicts that arise when family women, particularly single parents, must work rotating schedules, early mornings or late night shifts, or weekends. Yet two-thirds of the respondents said that they had learned to cope with work schedules and other responsibilities, and that there were no longer major conflicts between the two. The attitude in most cases was that work held at least equal importance to other duties.

Of crucial concern to all women who have ever thought of non-traditional work are the attitudes and reactions from family and friends. Often women who are genuinely unhappy in a female traditional line of work still remain in it rather than risk the disapproval that often has accompanied non-traditional work. Alternately, the woman encountering genuine difficulties in non-traditional work might be convinced by a highly supportive family to "stick with it" until the problems are worked out. The women were asked about the feelings of family and friends toward their non-traditional work. Sisters turned out to be the most supportive group, followed by female friends and fathers. No group registered less than fifty percent on the support scale. Although opposition to the women's jobs was not overwhelming in any group, it was greatest among husbands and boyfriends (17% opposed) and male friends (16%). Mothers tended to have

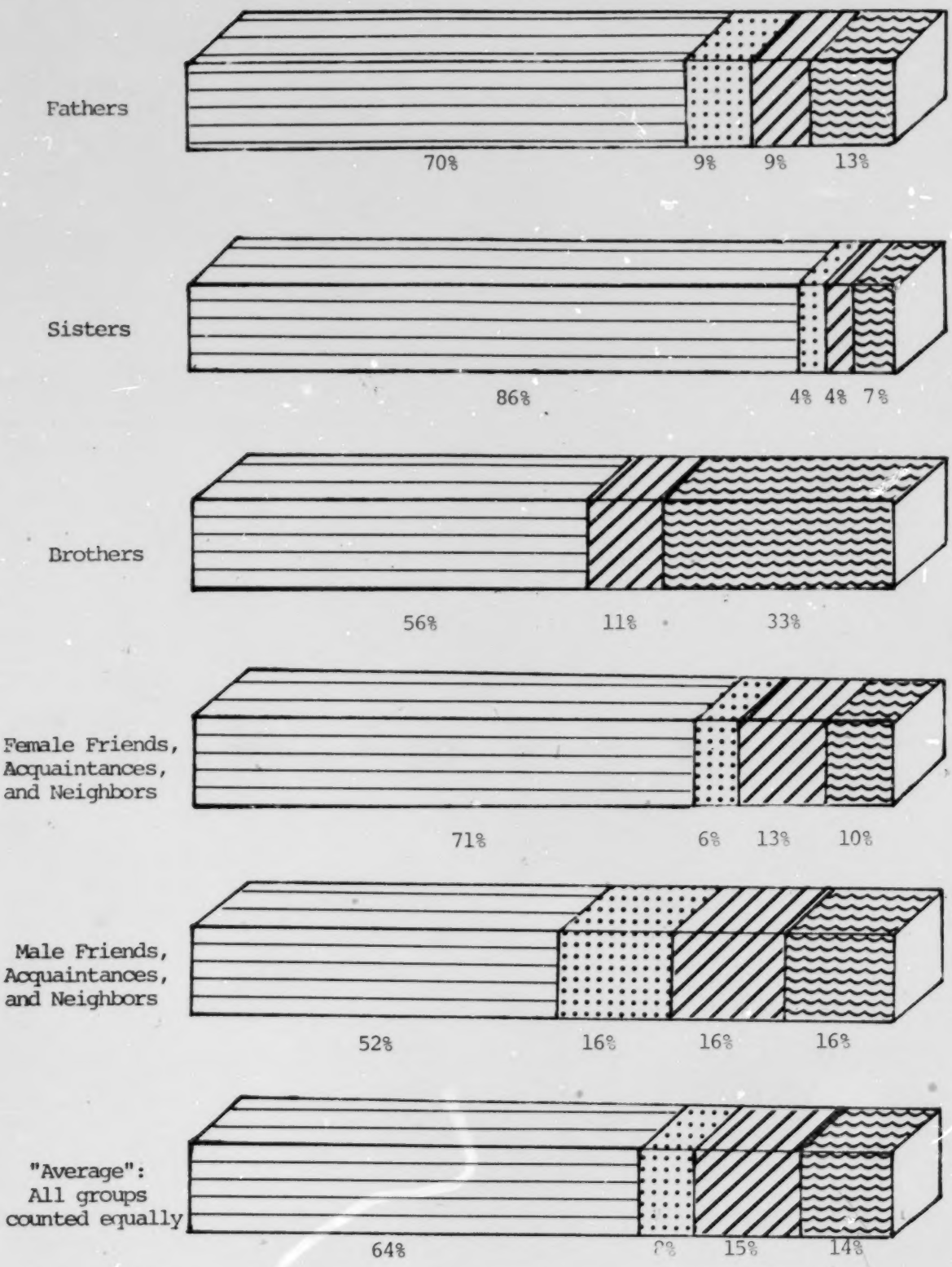
mixed feelings more often, reflecting competing concerns for the economic success and future safety of their daughters.

RESPONSE ANALYSIS 2

ATTITUDES OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS TOWARD WOMEN IN NON-TRADITIONAL JOBS



RESPONSE ANALYSIS 2, continued



SOURCE: Interviews with Bureau-placed women in non-traditional jobs.

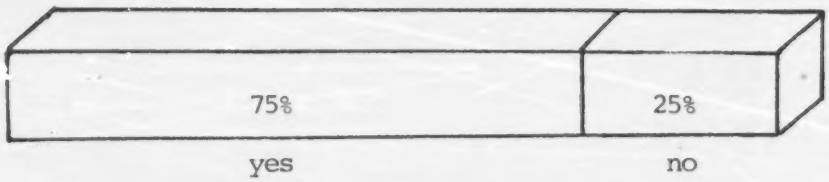
PROBLEMS ON THE JOB:

Because of the underrepresentation of women in non-traditional jobs, the arrival of the new female employee often creates an unfamiliar situation in a work force which was previously all-male. About one-half of the Bureau-placed women work in organizations which employ from one hundred to fifteen hundred men. The females in these firms are usually found in clerical positions, with only a handful of women in non-traditional work. Sixty percent of the Bureau-placed women work in organizations with fewer than five women in non-traditional jobs. Some work for employers with no other women in non-traditional jobs, or perhaps only one other. Even in organizations where several non-traditionally employed women are working, these women usually do not work together closely. More likely they are divided one per shift or one per crew, and rarely have the advantage of being able to reinforce each other in dealing with the challenges of the new job and the new environment. In eighteen of thirty-three cases, Bureau-placed women were the only females in their work crew.

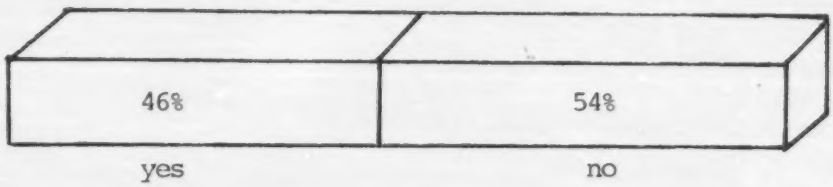
Preparation by the woman for the new job is another crucial matter. Some of those who thought they were prepared to take a non-traditional job encountered attitudes or work assignments that they simply had not expected. In a series of questions, we probed the topics of preparation and expectations.

RA 3:

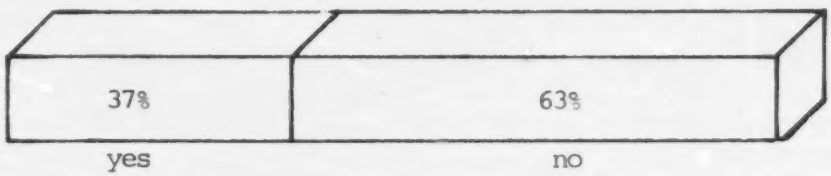
Were you prepared for this job when you took it? (16 responses)



RA 4:
Did you know what to expect on the job? (19 responses)

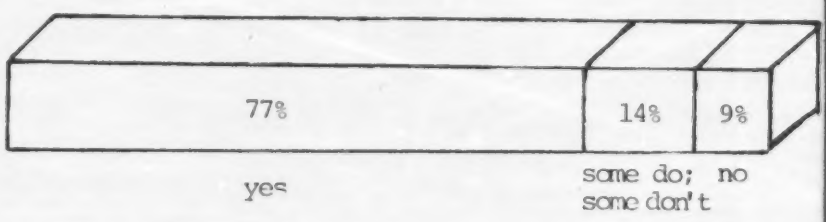


RA 5:
Did you have basic knowledge that would enable you to do the work? (19 responses)

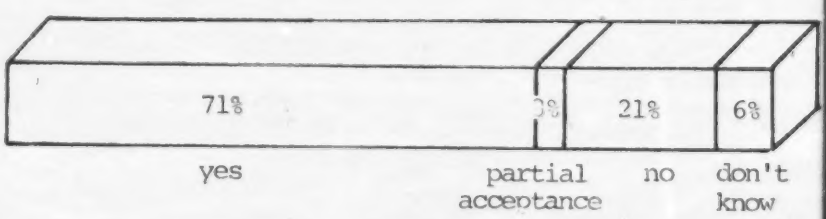


Another battery of questions dealt with the attitudes of fellow workers and foremen toward women workers.

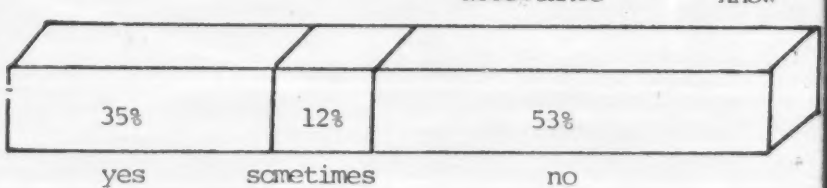
RA 6:
Do other workers accept you? (35 responses)



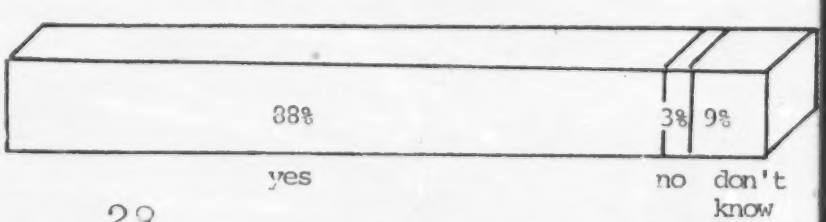
RA 7:
Does your foreman or supervisor accept you? (34 responses)



RA 8:
Are you treated differently on the job because you are female? (34 responses)



RA 9:
Do you feel that you are changing the attitudes of foremen and co-workers toward women in NT work? (32 responses)



The women were asked about specific problems they had encountered on the job. Fifteen women reported no significant job-related problems. But the remaining women reported problems ranging from the annoying to the impossible. Response analyses 10 and 11 outline, individually and by category, the on-the-job problems reported by the women.

RESPONSE ANALYSIS 10

PROBLEMS ON THE JOB:

women in non-traditional jobs

Problem Cited	Number Reporting It
No problem	15
Difficulty or inability of male co-workers to adjust to non-traditionally employed women	7
Harassment from foremen or supervisors	5
Difficulty with the physical aspects of the work	3
Sex discrimination in pay	3
Lack of acceptance by male co-workers (coldness and hostility)	3
Sexual harassment and propositioning by male co-workers	2
"Dirty tricks" played on the woman worker by co-workers	2
Unwillingness of male workers to teach women the skills of the work	2
"Survival testing" (assignment of women to do work that is much more difficult than that assigned normally, in effort to get them to quit)	2

RESPONSE ANALYSIS 10, continued

Problem Cited	Number Reporting It
Verbal disrespect by male workers	1
Lack of separate toilet and shower facilities for women	1
Lack of deserved promotions for women	1
Inaccurate evaluation of work by supervisors	1
Female worker's difficulty in adjusting to the "male" work environment	1
Threat by male co-workers on the safety of a woman worker	1

RESPONSE ANALYSIS 11

PROBLEMS ON THE JOB, BY TYPE:

women in non-traditional jobs

Type of Problem	Number of women reporting
no problems	15
problem of female job holder in adjusting to the new work environment or to the work	5
problems with co-workers	18
problems with foreman or immediate supervisor	8
problems with employing company and its policies	4
TOTAL:	50*

*Total adds up to more than number of women interviewed due to multiple problems reported by some women.

It appears that barriers to women in non-traditional jobs often lie not in employer attitudes or in women's attitudes, but in the attitudes of male workers who, because of misunderstanding or malice, resent the intrusion of women into their all-male enclave. With the assistance of women's employment projects, employers could design and implement effective education projects in this sensitive area, to the benefit of employee morale and probably of production.

Graduation from training status, salary advancement and promotions tended to ease the adjustment period for the women workers. Of thirty-two respondents, twenty (63%) said they were in craft-union apprenticeships, appliance repair training, or technical jobs in industry, with training programs of up to four years.

Three of the women interviewed had been promoted. Only three of the thirty-one respondents (10%) still working had not received at least one pay increase during their service. Four (13%) had merited four increases; eight (52%) had at least two salary increases to their credit; and 90% (28 women) had received at least one pay raise. Also noteworthy is the fact that these impressive salary gains were earned by women with an already high average beginning hourly wage of $4.56 per hour. An informal sample indicated that the average salary increase was nearly $200 per month per woman.

HOW THE WOMEN FEEL ABOUT THEIR JOBS:

In spite of the job-associated problems reported by many of the women, overall reactions toward the job were highly pos-

itive. Of those still working, twenty-three felt completely positive about their work; only one felt completely negative. The group exhibited a solid reluctance to return to traditional women's work. Chances for personal advancement were rated good by twenty (88%) of the women and poor by five. Thirty women rated themselves "excellent" or "above average" in work performance. In a simple benefit-problem analysis, 27 of 35 respondents said the benefits of non-traditional work outweighed its problems, while two thought that problems outweighed benefits. The others felt that problems and benefits were equal.

Each of the women interviewed offered advice to other women who are considering or seeking non-traditional work. Mentioned most often was the attitude of the female job-seeker. There was a widespread belief that the attitude of the woman was a crucial factor in how she was perceived and dealt with by personnel managers, supervisors, and co-workers. Women were advised to incorporate friendliness and pleasantness with enthusiasm, independence, and hefty doses of determination.

Tips on "making up your mind" to seek non-traditional work were offered by most. "Find out thoroughly (from employers, husbands and fathers, the Bureau for Women, or any other source) what the work involves. Analyze pros and cons. Then make up your mind to do it, or not to. Once a decision is made, stick with it."

There were many tips on doing the assigned work, on handling the physical and mental strains of the job. Some of the do's and don'ts: "Do all the work you can. Try to solve your own problems by yourself. Do as much as your body allows. Ask

questions when in doubt. Don't expect anyone else to carry your load; carry it yourself."

They offered an avalanche of suggestions for dealing with co-workers. "Don't be pushy," advised one woman. "Don't be meek," advised others. "Give the men a chance and keep an open mind," one worker said. Another thought the important thing was to "demand respect and respect yourself." Many recommended that the woman simply "be herself."

The virtues of flexibility and sense of humor were also extolled. "Take everything in stride," they recommended. "Be able to roll with the punches. Learn to take kidding and teasing." And perhaps most helpful, "Be prepared for whatever might happen, because it probably will."

Topics less frequently mentioned were those dealing with the job interview ("Don't wear sexy clothes, give a firm handshake.") and those dealing with the disparities between hardhat and femininity ("Never forget you're a woman, but, remember, you are a woman in a man's world. Learn to draw the femininity line between the woman at work and the woman at home.").

Interviewees who were still working were asked the open-ended question, "How has your life changed since you got this job?" The change most often cited was financial. Twenty-three of the thirty-three respondents said that their ability to contribute substantially to the family's support had improved their economic status. The only disadvantages cited were an increase in pressure and responsibility (cited by 6%) and a decrease in social, church, or family life (15%). Outlined below are the responses in decreasing order of frequency:

RESPONSE ANALYSIS 13

HOW HAS YOUR LIFE CHANGED SINCE YOU TOOK THE NON-TRADITIONAL JOB?
33 respondents

Increased financial security or prosperity	70%
Greater happiness or satisfaction	33%
Greater self-confidence	33%
Greater independence	24%
Expansion of my abilities and interests	21%
Decreased social, church, or family life	15%
Increased planning for the future	12%
Increased ability to relate to people of all kinds	9%
The job made me "grow up"	6%
More equitable sharing of home responsibilities among family members	6%

ATTITUDES OF EMPLOYERS TOWARD WOMEN IN NON-TRADITIONAL JOBS

The topic of employer adjustment to women in non-traditional jobs was probed to aid in the evaluation of the project and to respond to requests for employer attitude information. The project specifically sought opinions of employers who had hired the Bureau's clients.

Staff in twenty-two organizations were asked for their opinions via questionnaires that covered a range of topics from employee behavior to analysis of Bureau services. Personnel managers and company administrators were asked to express opinions on the advantages and disadvantages of employing women in non-traditional jobs as seen from an admin-

istrative viewpoint. Opinions of foremen and immediate supervisors were sought to gain the perspective of those involved in on-the-line, day-to-day operation of the business.

Less than half of the target group responded, despite repeated efforts to encourage the return of the surveys. In some cases, the employer felt unqualified to answer our queries because of the small number of non-traditionally employed women at his business. Other employers thought the information sought was too sensitive to be released. In most instances, however, it appeared that businesses simply failed to return the questionnaires because of lack of interest.

Those managers, foremen, and supervisors who answered our requests did so with apparent candor and with a sincere concern for the conditions that surround the employment of women in occupations that are new to them. Altogether, ten company administrators and eight supervisors shared their experiences. While the number in neither case is great, their thoughts do hint at the feelings of their counterparts in the industrial community.

OPINIONS OF COMPANY ADMINISTRATORS

Most administrators felt that no landmark effects, positive or negative, had resulted from the addition of women to their workforce. Six of the nine managers reported relatively insignificant changes, if any, in production, employee morale, behavior, attendance, and turnover.

Below are examples of this group's comments.

A Chemical Plant Personnel Manager:

"I can report no significant differences. Our plants are highly automated and females appear to be quite capable of handling the job with perhaps a few exceptions, for instance, turning valve handles. Some of the smaller men probably have the same difficulty. Some male peers are not overly pleased with the idea of female operators, but this situation should resolve itself with time and with establishment of credibility."

A Union Representative:

"There are no great effects either way. There is some change in employee behavior: sometime improvement, sometime deterioration in such things as language and respect among workers. This is governed primarily by female attitude."

Other administrators reported more noticeable changes, both positive and negative. A wholesale-retail equipment firm manager said, "Employee morale, behavior, attendance, and turnover have been greatly improved" by the addition of women to his work force. Another labor-union representative noted these changes:

"Production improves. When females are working in conjunction with males, the male wants to be impressive; the female wants to prove ability. Morale is excellent. Overall, behavior has been good. Attendance has been good. Turnover is fair."

A personnel manager for an offshore drilling firm offered these comments:

"There have not been any positive effects in the hiring of women... We have not increased production or greatly alleviated our personnel shortages. The negative effects have been low morale, less completion of necessary duties primarily due to ... the inability of the women hired so far to perform the same duties as men ... What I am saying is that we have not gained anything production-wise or profit-wise by hiring women..."

The group was queried as to what changes in the physical

plant, in the workload and its distributions, in the work schedule, and in training procedures were necessitated when women were hired for the first time. Three reported that no changes in these areas were necessary. Four reported the only changes were in the addition of restrooms, showers, and "change houses" for the women. One employer cited the changes necessary in training procedures for female employees:

> "Some higher percentage of women than men do require more training reinforcement during the early stages of employment. This is probably because the basics of a plant are not fully understood. Our training efforts therefore have been affected and will continue to change to meet the women's needs."

Another administrator mentioned changes in physical facilities as well as in workload and scheduling:

> "The workload has to be re-distributed because the women have not been able to perform some of the heavy work such as lifting of material... And, two of the three women refuse to rotate to the night shift."

Still another said that the only change had occured in "our own attitudes. We probably still need to change more in this respect... It is still difficult to accept the idea that a small person, especially a woman, can physically do some of the work."

Seven of the ten administrators cited no differences in the the traits of men and women as they started out in similar positions. One thought that women tended to become more aggressive and take more initiative after a few months on the job. Another thought that women's better attitudes and greater efforts counteracted men's better understanding of mechanics. One manager had observed women who "were not used to the working conditions . . . and became discouraged after being in the workforce for several

months."

Employers were asked about their degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the performance of women in non-traditional jobs. Four said they were "very satisfied," four were "satisfied," one was "only fairly satisfied," and one said he was "thoroughly dissatisfied." The comments on this question shed further light:

> "We have been thoroughly dissatisfied because the women have not added anything to the productivity of this business in a highly competitive field."

> "I am not completely satisfied in that the women bring a great deal more emotionalism into the plant's workforce. Also, the women tend to stand aside and expect men to perform the heavier and dirtier work and the men continue to perform the heavier and dirtier work as though they did not believe that a woman could perform the particular work."

> "Satisfaction has been achieved but none of the women in my exposure show an above-average understanding of the job. In other words, their promotion to higher positions will take longer."

"Women are somewhat more conscientious," offered one personnel manager. Another thought that by 1980, women would be "just another hardhat." A third had a more objective viewpoint: "Some of the women have been very good and some not-so-good, and some no good at all--just like our men."

There was no pattern of agreement among the managers on the career aspirations of the women. Some believed the average woman was looking for a short-term job, others for a long-term career. Still others said that such matters depended solely on the individual woman.

In answer to a question on how women should prepare themselves for non-traditional work, employers offered many suggestions, but

most had a common theme: "Learn any kind of mechanics you can." The suggestions ranged from "build birdhouses" and "fix washing machines" to "learn to recognize and handle tools" and "prepare in the fields of piping, pumps, and tanks." Most suggested formal schooling on mechanical topics--"shop" courses in high school, vocational and trade schools in everything from drafting to auto mechanics. Three managers saw a need for changes in women's attitudes: "Don't look for something for nothing...be prepared to earn your keep...change your attitudes about heavy work, lifting, climbing." One of the three recommended that a woman:

> ". . . realize that physically the work is hard and realize that for a while she must produce even more than a man in the same position in order to win acceptance. . . Understand that if she wants respect from the men, not to try to be one of the boys, but to set a standard for the type of respect she wants to receive."

The Bureau's performance as an employment and referral agency was the topic of still another question.

Three employers did not assess our strong points and weak points. Another compiled with our request for absolute candor. "Your initial screening of candidates was poor," he wrote. "In general, your counselors should be much more careful and exercise much better judgement in the referring of applicants to industry."

Other administrators reported a higher degree of satisfaction with the program. "The Bureau seems to screen applicants better than employment agencies. There is a feeling of sincerity in the placing of the right applicant for a position," wrote one. An industrial relations manager at a plant specializing in agriculture chemicals lauded the services of the Bureau in this manner:

"We were delighted with your referral of _____. You were very selective and did not put us in the position of having to reject someone who would not even come close to qualifying for the job."

A Union apprenticeship director echoed those sentiments with these words:

"You pointed out to the applicants the good and bad points of employment in non-traditional jobs and some of the things that are expected of them. Your applicants also seem to be better qualified than the average applicant."

THE VIEWPOINT OF THE SUPERVISOR/FOREMAN

The project staff recognizes the crucial role of the first-line supervisor in setting the mood of the work environment. This occasions the need to supplement research on attitudes of personnel managers and adminsitrators with information on how foremen and supervisors view women in non-traditional jobs.

More often than not, supervisors rated the acceptance of women in non-traditional work by their male co-workers as "very good." Three of the eight ratings were "somewhat good." None of the foremen rated male acceptance of the women as "very poor" or even "somewhat poor."

Half of the supervisors said that there had been specific problems due to the employment of women in their work crews; half said that no problems had arisen. The cited problems ranged from child-care conflicts during overtime work, to what one foreman called "obvious male-female encounters." "Women cry when men wouldn't," one foreman said. Another said that his women were "bossy at times." Others pointed to a "difficulty in accepting corrections" or, similarly, "a resentfulness in accepting the role of trainee" as problems among female employees. A foreman

at a chemical facility pointed to a problem in women's inability to handle heavy work, specifically lifting and operating a jackhammer. A labor-union foreman said that self-respect was the principal need of his women workers.

Only two of seven respondents noted any positive effects from the employment of women; five said that there were no evident advantages to hiring women. The advantages cited were better behavior in the workforce and increased cooperation between workers in a sexually integrated crew. According to these supervisors, the women's lack of mechanical ability and lack of sheer physical strength was counterbalanced, at least partially, by their desire to succeed, willingness to learn, above-average effort, and attention to detail.

Foremen and supervisors were asked what, in their opinion, would motivate a woman to seek non-traditional employment. Financial considerations emerged as the main reason. All eight said that women worked "to support themselves or their families." Seven cited "good pay" as the motivation. Six thought that women worked in non-traditional jobs "for the same reasons men do," and five said it was "to earn money for luxuries." Only two of the eight thought that women worked in non-traditional fields because of the advancement possibilities to be found in those fields.

Asked about their overall impression of the women they supervised, three said the impression was "very good," one said he was "favorably impressed," another rated the women "fair," and still another reported the women equal to the men in the crew. Two elaborated on these general impressions:

"Women produce less on jobs requiring heavy exertion.

They don't seem as dedicated as they miss more work due to family considerations."

and

"Impressions? Good in production, timid in attitude, above average in dedication and commitment, and up and down in motivation."

The foremen and supervisors were asked, "How do the benefits of employing blue-collar women compare to the problems involved?" In other words, in employing this group of women, are advantages or disadvantages greater, or are they equal? The response was divided equally among the three alternatives.

The supervisors were asked for their suggestions on how the WE project could more effectively serve applicants and employers. The suggestion cited most often (seven times) was that applicants should be better counseled in what the job involves. Six of the supervisors thought that women should be screened more closely for mechanical aptitude; four felt they should be screened more closely for commitment to non-traditional work. Three foremen mentioned increased screening for size and strength, for related job experience, and for ability to get along with other employees. Referral of women with more technical schooling and with more academic education was suggested least often.

CONCLUSION

The number of employment projects in the nation which highlight non-traditional employment as a viable career choice for women is minimal. Most such projects emphasize administrative, managerial, and professional employment. Few of them concentrate, as Women and Employment and Jobs Unlimited do, on careers in

blue-collar and skilled-craft occupations.

The results of a program of this type cannot be guaranteed and any framework, however successful, is not to be regarded as an infallible formula for future projects. Each program must be adapted to the area it serves as regards types of industry, social attitudes, and the quality of applicants and staff.

The fact that our clients are Southern women is significant for the overall success of the project. Louisiana women have grown up with a heritage which, to a great extent, has precluded consideration of non-traditional work. The "Southern belle," crinolined and pedestaled, still persists as the ideal of femininity. As a result, the first obstacle for this program has been the Southern frame of mind, and our primary efforts have dealt with the women's own self-images.

For most of the 46 women placed in non-traditional jobs, the greatest strides came in the area of wages and chances for advancement. Because of the high percentage of heads-of-household (61%), financial considerations played a large part in the women's occupational choices.

Interviews with the women also revealed that shift schedules were less of a barrier to blue-collar employment than many believe. A job retention rate of 85% with an average eight months of service indicates that, with proper counseling and screening of prospective employees, excessive turnover rates for women workers can be avoided.

In most cases, there appears to be a need for adjustment by both the woman worker and her employer. Few of either group

reported "no problems" connected with the job, while many more had encountered specific problems related to attitude and performance. Preconceived notions of women workers tended to give way once ability and commitment were demonstrated. Consequently, many of the difficulties could be remedied by understanding and cooperation on the part of employers, supervisors, employees, and the project staff.

The study further revealed that the experience of non-traditional employment has been a positive one for the majority of women involved. In their reluctance to return to more traditional work, the women made clear that, regardless of the challenges, the advantages of their jobs surpassed the disadvantages.

Any conclusions drawn from the opinions of employers and supervisors must be subject to limitations, due to the small number of respondents. As a whole, administrators failed to notice any significant effects from the employment of women. In some instances, physical changes were necessary, such as the addition of facilities to accommodate the female employees. Only one company official mentioned the need for workload and shift re-distribution.

Whereas company administrators could see no great changes in production or employee morale, half of the responding supervisors reported definite problems arising from the employment of women. Most of the trouble resulted from either character conflicts or the unfamiliarity of the women with the work. Concerning performance, impressions tended to agree. Only one from each group had unfavorable comments about the accomplishments of female employees. This seems to corroborate the sentiments of

the women themselves, of whom 88% rated their job performance as excellent or above average. Neither foremen nor administrators perceived any considerable advantages in the hiring of women, although overall reactions were generally positive.

For those considering a move into non-traditional work, there was advice from both sides. The women tended to concentrate on attitude and determination, maintaining that enthusiasm often compensated for the initial lack of know-how and experience. Employers, on the other hand, stressed the practical aspects of the job and suggested that prospective employees prepare themselves with a working knowledge of mechanics. Perhaps the point made most often was the need for a real understanding of the job and all it entails. Over 50% of the women did not know what to expect when they reported for work.

The success of the projects Jobs Unlimited and Women and Employment can best be determined by the people they have served. For the 46 women placed into non-traditional employment, success has been in the form of financial security. It has meant that those who were classified as underemployed (11%), welfare clients (81%), economically disadvantaged (50%), or unemployed (72%) have been helped out of the poverty cycle. An 85% retention rate indicates that a program of this type can also benefit employers. Their suggestions on improving bureau services will be helpful for future counseling and referral. Obstacles remain which prevent the full participation of women in the labor market, but the first step has been taken. "Equal opportunity in employment" is the goal in sight. We look forward to its full realization.

THE PIONEERS IN PROFILE

What follows are twelve brief biographical sketches of the interview subjects. They were chosen at random to properly reflect the diversity of the women and their experiences in their new employment. Names of the women, their companies, or other identifying characteristics have been changed or eliminated to grant anonymity.

Bonnie M. earns twice as much money in her job as a laborer as she did in her former job as an insurance clerk. The separated mother of two plans to be in the labor force until retirement. "Staying at home would be a bore to me," she admits. "I'm doing this mainly to make a step forward."

Bonnie has recently been approached by her supervisors with the offer of a foreman's position in the near future. This would mean supervising a crew of 8-12 workers, a challenge she is more than willing to accept.

Whole-hearted support from her family and acceptance by her co-workers have strengthened Bonnie's own positive attitude. She straightforwardly rates herself "excellent" in job performance. And while she loves the money the job brings in, she has gained a satisfaction that money cannot buy. "I feel great. I'm just as proud as I can be. I am accomplishing something."

* * *

Connie M. sums up in six words her feelings about her current job as wareman in a chemical plant: "They pay well, but it's slavery." This is her second job in the material-handling and shipping field and she sees a few years as the maximum she will stay with her present employer. Most of her dissatisfaction concerns the working conditions. "The plant was built during WWII, and nothing much has changed since. There is no machinery to help with the physical parts of the job."

A former reading tutor, Connie now drives industrial trucks and is part of a three-man crew responsible for filling and stacking 500 to 600 barrels of liquid chemicals a day.

The switch from traditional to non-traditional work has brought many changes to her life. She reports that she is more constructive, more independent, and quieter. Financial security has also made it possible for Connie to plan for the future. "I am encouraged to get a better education - and I can afford to pay for it myself."

"One of my male friends thinks that I am the most feminine woman he has ever met," relates Barbara G., a plant operator. This statement might go a long way to dispelling the myth that women in non-traditional jobs have to sacrifice their femininity when they don the hardhat.

A divorced head-of-household with an eight-year-old son, Barbara generally works a rotating-shift schedule, requiring a considerable amount of adjustment. She is ranked second in plant operator seniority in a small chemical company which employs only one other woman in a blue-collar work force of 60.

Dedication to her job has caused some problems in Barbara's personal life, but she is determined to remain in this line of work for many years. "Security, the ability to support my son, and happiness" are the reasons Barbara gives for her decision to work. In addition to material gains, she confesses there are other, intangible rewards. "My confidence has gone up tremendously. And I don't have to look for a handout from anyone."

* * *

Sarah S. used to be a receptionist. The separated mother of three now makes industrial fittings at a plant where she is the only white woman in a blue-collar job. Though apprehensive about her position, Sarah is committed to non-traditional work. "I am going to do a 'man's job' at a 'man's rate of pay' for the rest of my years," she insists.

In her present job, Sarah has encountered some opposition toward her presence. She is accepted by co-workers, but claims that her foreman is openly hostile to the employment of women in the blue-collar field. Despite this situation, Sarah agrees that the job has improved her own sense of accomplishment. "I am happier for myself. Now I am Somebody, not a Mrs. Somebody Else."

For other women considering non-traditional employment, Sarah advises basic training in weights and measures, use of tools, and mechanics. But equally important, she says, is attitude, which should combine self-confidence with perseverance.

Helen P. has had widely differing experiences in the two non-traditional jobs she has held. She reports that as an operator trainee at one chemical plant she was treated with open hostility and eventually dismissed unfairly. Now employed by another company, Helen's reception has been excellent and she enjoys her work.

Single and 24, Helen finds few problems with her schedule of 12 hour shifts on a three-day rotating basis. She works for the excellent wages, generous fringe benefits, and the satisfaction of accomplishment.

Helen admits that her co-workers and foreman were skeptical at first about her job ability and judgement, but dedication and self-reliance have changed a few minds. Now she proudly refers to herself as "just another operator" in a total work force of 300.

* * *

Fran G., a divorced mother of one, makes no bones about the hard times she goes through in order to keep her job. Now in her tenth month of work, she relates several experiences, including a threat of rape, which have plagued her. She is the victim of frequent "dirty tricks" which jar her peace of mind and occasionally threaten her safety. Fran is troubled by these incidents, but each one of them makes her more determined to stay on the job.

For the first eight months of her employment, Fran was a production attendant. Her responsibilities included mixing chemicals and inserting them into the circulating valves, adding measured amounts of oil to propane tanks, and decontaminating liquid lead. Two months ago she chose to take a maintenance position because it offered more regular hours. However, the mostly janitorial work is less of a challenge than Fran would like. She looks forward to a career in plant operations, but in the meantime, Fran is earning an excellent salary and gaining valuable experience in an industrial environment, and defending her right to work in a non-traditional job.

Florence E. reports no problems related to her job as an industrial power plant operator. "There's nothing hard about my work. The atmosphere is friendly and informal, and everyone is treated the same way," she says.

Florence is 24, single, and lives with her parents in a rural community. She works a rotating shift schedule and two weekends each month. She commutes 35 miles to work each way. Those close to Florence have been highly supportive of her decision to enter the non-traditional field.

With 17 years of schooling and barely lacking a master's degree in education, Florence might be thought by some to be overeducated for her work. But because of the comparatively low wages in the teaching profession, Florence prefers her present work and plans to be with the company for many years to come.

While the economic advantages are substantial, the main benefits of this job, she concludes, have come in the form of changes in attitude. "I have learned to take on responsibility. This job has made me grow up a lot."

* * *

Beth J. is depressed about her job as a tool clerk. She believes that it offers no opportunity for advancement or increased salary. As a separated mother of one, Beth cannot afford a period of voluntary unemployment while she looks for other work.

A former military administration clerk, Beth was the first woman in a production job at her plant. Her responsibilities as a tool clerk include inventory and requisition of supplies, warehousing, and minor repair work on mechanized tools.

Though committed to a lifetime of "plant work," Beth sees no future with her present employer. Acceptance by her fellow workers is not the problem, she insists, but the lack of recognition from her supervisor. Initial experiences have left Beth bitter about her job, but not about non-traditional work in general. She strongly encourages other women to break out of the mold for "a chance to use your mind."

Gwen C. is twenty-three and single. One would never guess from her 5'3", 110-pound frame that she is a long-haul diesel truck driver, and that a large part of her job involves loading and unloading freight. Her past work experience has included installation of burglar alarms and clerical work.

Gwen prefers trucking in spite of the problems that come with the job. She quit her last job because of sexual harassment from her driving partner. Other problems are caused by the itinerant life of the trucker. "When you leave town with a load, you don't really know if you'll be back in four days or four weeks," Gwen declares. Moreover, a small person may find it difficult to handle the giant rigs which seldom have power steering.

Nevertheless, Gwen points out that this particular field has its advantages. Among them are the constant flow of new experiences, the lack of routine, travel opportunities, the chance to meet new people, and the good earning potential of the truck driver.

* * *

Wilma F. was employed as a plastics laborer for four months before she quit. "It got to be too much for me. Working with fiberglas is tough - you never stop itching from it." Unfair treatment from her foreman and unexceptional wages also influenced her decision.

For the past eight months the separated mother of a four-year-old son has worked as a janitor for a contract maintenance firm. Her duties include cleaning four or five bank buildings each night. Though she enjoys the work, the pay is low.

Wilma fully intends to return to non-traditional work in the future with an eye toward a plant job. The reasons are mainly economic: "Try feeding, clothing, and housing a family of two on $2.50 an hour."

Lucy B. had only worked two days as a fiberglas fabricator when she found out that she was pregnant. She had had misgivings about her work during the two days she worked. She contends that the interviewer had given her an all-too-rosy picture of "work in the back." She found it to be hot and dirty. Moreover, there was pressure to work quickly with rest breaks taken hurriedly or not at all. Lucy quit the same day she learned of her pregnancy. Those two days soured her on non-traditional work. Her plans are to return to elementary and junior high teaching. What did she learn from her brief encounter with non-traditional work? "I learned to find out exactly what a job is like before I accept it - what is actually done, the dress requirements, the safety equipment to be worn. I didn't know what to expect when I got there - and nobody told me. Now I know better."

* * *

A degree in economics notwithstanding, Hazel L. looks forward to a long career as a laborer in a chemical plant. Before this, she worked as a secretary, substitute teacher, and butcher. Married and the mother of two daughters, Hazel reports that some members of her family cannot understand her choice of occupation. Yet she now earns more than twice as much as she did in other jobs, and is doing better than many white collar workers with similar degrees.

As a laborer, Hazel's duties have included wielding jackhammers, shovels, picks, and high-pressure hoses. She is currently assigned to janitorial work temporarily.

Though she has been generally well-received by fellow employees and supervisors, Hazel believes that a few of her co-workers cannot accept the presence of women as laborers. But this has not deterred her, for she feels the benefits of the job outweigh any disadvantages.

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